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Essays, Expositions, &c.

HISTORY OF BAPTISTS, AND OF BAPTIST PRINCIPLES.
CENTURY NINTH.

POLITICAL Christianity was now enthroned. The great Priest at Rome had so effectually surrounded the Princes of the Western world, with his insidious influence, that they became his ready vassals, and deemed it an honour to do his bidding. "The kingdoms of this world had become the kingdoms" of the Pope of Rome, who, by his devoted agents and partizans, converted the Western kings into the merest creatures of State that priestly pride could desire to control. Their religion (if anything they possessed deserved the name) was nothing better than a school-boy lesson from the Pope, and all the objects of their pretended piety were so many modes of exalting the church, whose head and ruler sat in splendid idleness and luxury in the decaying capital of the world.

As a too natural consequence, the most sacred rites of religion, but especially the ordinance of baptism, received a *political* rather than a spiritual significance, and the whole web-work of gospel ordinances wore the appearance of a piece of State machinery, much more than that of service rendered from intelligent hearts to the great Ruler of the universe. This was carried so far that when Lewis, the son of Charlemagne, was applied to by Harald Klack, a petty

king of Jutland, to aid in restoring him to his throne from which one Regner Lodbrock had driven him, that monarch consented on the condition that Harald would embrace Christianity; and, as a matter of course, be baptized. To this he consented, and was baptized with his brother at Mentz, A. D. 826. He returned to his own country attended by two divines of the Romish Church; and his compliance with the terms imposed upon him by Lewis was dignified by the name of conversion! But how he could know what conversion really meant, or what baptism implied, was made no subject of inquiry. He promptly became a *political* Christian, and more than this the Romish Church did not care to accomplish. This was a type of the kind of religion propagated in this century, and serves to show how little the people knew of believers' baptism, and how little care was taken to preserve its true significance to the world.

The Paterines in Italy remained unmoved, as did also the Paulicians in the east, by the degeneracy prevailing around them. It is credibly stated of the former, that "those of their churches where baptism was administered, were known by the name of baptismal churches; and to such churches all the Christians in the vicinage flocked for baptism. When

Christianity spread into the country, the people met for worship where they could, but all candidates came up to the baptismal church to receive the ordinance." In the east, the Paulicians availed themselves of the toleration granted by the emperor Nicephorus in the beginning of this century, and so widely disseminated their opinions that they became formidable to the East. This, however, did not last long, for in 811, under the furious Leo, they were fairly hunted upon the mountains; and under the barbarous empress Theodora, in 845, they suffered the most horrible cruelties. One hundred thousand of them were put to death with all the refined tortures of an infernal malignancy, and the remainder were scattered abroad among the neighbouring nations. Some of them wandered into Europe, where they sowed the seeds of opposition to Romish supremacy, and laid the foundation of numerous churches, by whom believers' baptism was cherished and preserved, for ages prior to the great Lutheran reformation.

Among the few who renounced, or who never adopted, infant baptism, Hinchmar, Bishop of Laudan, in France, took a conspicuous place. He had the manly courage to renounce the practice; and his diocese and people were accused in the synod of Accincius of not baptizing children.

This took place about the year 850, and as this independent man has been abused by both Protestants and Catholics, it is proof presumptive that he dared to differ from both, by refusing to baptize unconscious infants into a faith of which they could have no knowledge.

But while the proofs are beyond dispute that infant baptism spread widely in this century, yet it is equally certain that it was baptism, and not sprinkling, that prevailed. Far as the churches had gone from the truth respecting the subjects of baptism, they nevertheless remained faithful as to the mode. In our own country this was proved by the council or provincial synod,* held at Calcuith, under Wulfred, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the year 816, and from other sources of a kindred kind. The dispute (so far as one existed at all) lay

between the infant and the adult, and not between sprinkling and immersion; and it will be shown in subsequent parts of this brief history, that sprinkling made its way into the church by slow and gradual innovations, which, little by little, usurped the place rightfully belonging to a more expressive ordinance.

Walafridus Strabo, who lived in this century, writes as follows: "It should be observed, that, in the primitive times, the grace of baptism was usually given to those *only* who were arrived at such maturity of body and mind, that they could understand what were the benefits of baptism; what was confessed and believed; and finally, what was to be observed by those that are regenerated in Christ." Colomesius, as quoted by another writer, remarks upon this passage—"Hence with reason you may infer, that adults only are the proper subjects of baptism." In strict accordance with this is a canon of the council of Paris, held in the year 829, which reads thus: "In the beginning of the holy church of God, no one was admitted to baptism unless he had before been instructed in the sacrament of faith and of baptism; which is proved by the words of Paul; Rom. vi. 3, 4."—(Booth's P. E., vol. i. p. 374.) To these testimonies may be added that of the council of Laodicea, as quoted by the author of *Centenary Traces of Baptism*, &c., which decreed "that those that will come to baptism, ought first to be instructed in the faith, and to make a confession thereof." From these authorities it is evident that in this ninth century, there were numerous churches, who, represented in important councils, were yet faithful to the original truth of God. Rome, and the Western churches generally, had, indeed, departed from that truth; but notwithstanding these, the Man of Sin had not yet covered all the land with the darkness of his overgrown shadow. The land of Egypt had many a little Goshen left, in whose secluded light the true Israel of God preserved his pure faith from the contaminations of the all-surrounding idolatry.

That the darkness was dense,—such as might be felt, especially in England (and the Continent, as a whole, was no better,) is evident from a remarkable letter by king Alfred, which is given by Dr. Henry from Spelman. It was written, it ap-

* See *Primitive Church Magazine* for February, page 26.

pears, to Wulfseg, bishop of London, and while it clearly describes the deplorable ignorance into which England had sunk in the time of Alfred, it also proves beyond all cavil the superior piety and intelligence of the British *prior* to the mission of Austin from Rome. The letter states: "I must inform you, my dear friend, that I often revolve in my mind the many learned and wise men who formerly flourished in the English nation, both among the clergy and laity. How happy were those times! Then the princes governed their subjects with great wisdom, according to the word of God, and became famous for their wise and upright administration. Then the clergy were equally diligent in reading, studying, and teaching; and this country was so famous for learning, that many came hither from foreign parts to be instructed. Then (before all was spoiled and burnt) the churches and monasteries were filled with excellent books in several languages. When I reflected on this, I sometimes wondered that these learned men, who were spread all over England, had not translated the best of these books into their native tongue. But then I presently answered myself, that these wise men could not imagine that ever learning would be so much neglected as to make this necessary; and believed that, the more languages were understood, the more learning would abound in any country."

In addition to this letter, Alfred's preface to his own translation of Gregory's tract on the duties of Pastors, might be quoted to show the depth of the ignorance that overspread the whole land. In that work the king lamented that there was not one priest south of the Thames, and very few north of the Humber, who could interpret the Latin service. And notwithstanding his zeal in the cause of learning, and the facilities he supplied for its acquisition, yet so profound was the public indifference, that a law was enacted by which all freeholders, possessed of not less than two hides of land were enjoined to send their children to school. As this was equal to a freehold of about two hundred acres, what must have been the condition of the *people*—the labourers, or, as they were then called, the *villeins*,—who constituted the great bulk of the population? If *compulsory* education

was necessary in the case of the substantial freeholder, what, even in Alfred's time, must not have been the deep, dark, unpierced ignorance of the thousands for whom no similar provision was made?

In such a state of almost barbaric ignorance, an enlightened view of believers' baptism was an impossibility. It was regarded, consequently, as an engine of state, or a piece of political mechanism. Even Alfred himself—though beyond all dispute *the first man of his age*,—so employed it, when having subdued the pagan Guthrun and his Danish hordes, he made it one of the conditions of peace that the Dane and his followers should be baptized. "Guthrun and his army," says Hume, "had no aversion to the proposal; and *without much instruction, or argument, or conference, they were all admitted to baptism*. The king answered for Guthrun at the font, gave him the name of Athelstan, and received him as his adopted son." To this, Thierry adds another important particular. He says that Guthrun "promised that, if the victors (Alfred and his army) would desist from pursuing him, he and his men would be baptized, and would retire to the territory of East Anglia, to dwell there in peace. The Saxon king, (Alfred) who was not strong enough to carry on the war to the utmost, accepted these proposals for a peace. (A. D. 879) *Guthrun and the other pagan captains swore, by a bracelet consecrated to their own gods, to receive baptism faithfully.*"

Seriously,—was anything ever more farcical, or even more profane? A pagan chief and his captains, receive *Christian (!) baptism*, and swear *by their own pagan idols*, to be faithful to its obligations! Was there ever a grosser contradiction? Or could there be, by any remote possibility, a more complete burlesque on the religion of the Son of God? And this was called *Christian baptism*! And our own noble Alfred stood sponsor for the fidelity of this pagan barbarian! Yet this was *Christian baptism* in the ninth century!

Collecting together all the existing evidence we possess upon the baptismal question, so far as this century is concerned, there can be but one conclusion regarding the political dictation by which it was imposed, and the stolid ignorance by which it was received. Here and

there, in obscure places, and beyond the influence of direct political interest, there were noble exceptions of enlightened Christians who administered baptism to none but those who avowed themselves believers in Christ. In all other directions, however, this sacred rite was degraded to the condition of a political expedient, and everywhere employed in the service of state churches. The papal church was the common mother of this numerous progeny; hence the great defender of infant baptism, Dr. Wall, candidly admits that Popery is the undisputed parent of *sprinkling*, which, let it ever be remembered, is the contrivance of priestly ingenuity to make the merely

political purpose more acceptable to the people at large. He says, that "*all those countries in which the usurped power of the Pope, is, or has formerly been owned, have left off dipping of children in the font: but that all other countries in the world, which had never regarded his authority, do still use it; and that basins, except in case of necessity, were never used by Papists, or any other Christians whatsoever, till by themselves.*"—This admission by Dr. Wall is exceedingly important, since it proves that the great champion of infant baptism as good as confesses that *sprinkling* is the invention of Popery, and can boast of no higher and no better parentage.

A.

GOOD ADVICE FOR ALL GOD'S PEOPLE.

Leaves from my Note Book.

BY A YORKSHIRE PREACHER.

(No. 9.)

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and he shall direct thy paths."—PROV. iii. 5, 6.

HERE is a piece of the best advice ever given to mortal man. It is a piece of advice that will profit the king as well as the subject, the rich as well as the poor, the aged as well as the young. It is a piece of advice that may be well carried out, in all life's changing scenes, whether they prove for the better, or turn out in appearance, to be for the worse. The man who acts according to its dictation will be a truly wise man; he will pass through the earth safely; enter heaven joyously, and mingle at last with the shining hosts, who worship God and the Lamb for ever.

Strange to state, however, although the advice is so good, it is seldom thought of, and still more rarely acted upon. Why is this? The answer is simple—it is advice that is not suited to the depraved appetite, and carnal wisdom of man. It lays human wisdom low, that it may exalt the wisdom of God: it debases the creature that it may lift on high the Creator; it takes the crown off man's brow, to place it on the King of kings and Lord of lords. This, however, is as it should be, and, if we neglect the counsel on that account, we

shall neglect our true and best interests; so sinner, if thou dost wish to be right, listen not with ready ear to the dictates of human wisdom, to the voice of the multitude, or to the carnal reason allied to flesh and blood; listen to God's words, to the advice here given, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." To "trust in the Lord," is to have confidence in him, to rely upon him, and to expect that he will do as he has said. How few, comparatively, trust the Lord thus! The many trust in themselves, in their fellows, in the world, in their schemes, in their supposed meritorious works, in their sects and parties, in their priests, in saints gone to glory, in angels, in anything, or anyone but the Lord. Now, our duty and our privilege is to trust in the Lord, and none else, and to trust in him for everything. Do we need temporal and spiritual mercies? We are to trust in the Lord for a supply. Do we need help at the present? We are to trust in the Lord at once for the help we need. Do we feel anxious concerning

the future? We are to take no anxious thought for the morrow, but to trust in the Lord who has engaged never to leave us nor forsake us. We can never trust God too much; the danger is in trusting him too little. Our warrant for repeated application is, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Why, then, should we not trust him? Desponding sinner, trust him as a God of providence, trust him as a God of grace, trust him as a God of glory, trust him to-day, trust him to-morrow, trust him till death, trust him for ever; and then, personally, thou shalt realize the promise, "He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about."

To what extent are we to trust in the Lord? "With all thine heart." Ah! here is the difficulty. We feel often that we can give the Lord a kind of half-hearted trust, but when do we trust him with *all* our heart? When do we trust him with all our powers? Too often, when we think that we are trusting in the Lord, we find, on a close examination, that we are trusting partly in the Lord, and partly in something else. Now, sinner, this will not do. It must not be a trust in the Lord, and something else, but a whole-hearted trust in the Lord *alone*. He has no partners, and he will not admit of divided service. He makes the demand, "Son, give me thine heart," and he will accept of nothing less. See, then, to it, that when thou dost profess to trust in the Lord, thou dost trust in him with *all* thine heart.

The way to do this, is to "lean not unto thine own understanding." To lean unto our own understanding, is opposed to a whole-hearted trust in God. When we lean unto our own understanding, we rely upon our wisdom, our powers of reason, our assumed excellent mental faculties. If we scheme, we are apt to think that no schemes are like ours. If we try to evade difficulty, we judge that our evasion is the best thing we can do, and will certainly lead to success. If two opinions are given concerning a controverted point, we have no hesitation in dogmatically asserting that our opinion is right, and that the other must be wrong. Should the Lord be pleased to try us, we arraign Him at our bar, and would fain call Him to an account. But

the query may be put, Are we not to use our reason? Hath the Lord given us mental powers, which we are not to exercise? Is it not right to plan and scheme, and give an opinion when required? Certainly, all this is correct, but to use our reason, exercise our mental powers, and plan, scheme and give opinions, *without taking the Lord into the council chamber*, is to abuse reason, trust in our own heart, and play the fool. To lean unto our own understanding, is to knock at the door of human wisdom first, and then, formally, knock at the door of Divine wisdom, or pass by it altogether. Such must expect to be entangled in their own meshes, to fall into their own pit, and to have this Scripture fulfilled in their experience, "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong."

To lean unto our own understanding is folly, because, by nature it is *depraved* and *dark*. Hence, the apostle prays for the Ephesians, that the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, they might know what was the hope of their calling, and what the riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance in the saints. And, again, in the same epistle, he tells us that certain Gentiles "walk in the vanity of their mind: having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." But not only is the understanding depraved and dark, but it is exceedingly *limited*. Zophar, in Job, puts the query well, "Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell: *what canst thou know?*" Now, at the best, we do but "know in part," in heaven only shall "we know even as we also are known." Bring forward your greatest men of understanding, still it is very easy for the Lord to "destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." "Lean not unto thine own understanding," is a sermon preached to us, in the histories of nations who have trusted to it and perished, in the foul falls of some of the wisest and greatest of Scripture heroes, and in all, the mistakes which as individuals, we have made,

from the first dawn and exercise of reason, unto the present day.

Hearken well, then, to the advice that is next given, "In all thy ways acknowledge him." It is a mercy that God will permit us to acknowledge him, a greater mercy that he *exhorts* us to acknowledge him, and a still greater mercy that he exhorts us in *all* our ways to acknowledge him. What are our greatest ways in comparison with his greatness? Compared with him, we are as grasshoppers, and our ways are not worth his notice. Yet, he tells us that in all our ways—trivial, though the greatest of them may appear in his sight—we are to acknowledge him, own him, take him into account, and seek his counsel. Wondrous boon! Inestimable privilege! Let us embrace the boon and grasp at the privilege, at every opportunity. Young people, ye who are just entering upon new spheres of action, who are about to move in fresh circles of society, who have prospects that appear fair and promising, yet, who will, notwithstanding, be exposed to many dangers,—begin well, by acknowledging God in all your ways,—

"Twill save you from a thousand snares,
To mind religion young."

In entering upon your trade or profession, in forming your companions, in choosing your partners for life, in managing your affairs, in wading through your troubles, in joining the church, in occupying any official post, in endeavouring to execute any duty, in whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, acknowledge God in all, and have the Lord's honour and glory in view, at the end of all. Acknowledge the Lord in your small affairs as well as in those that appear to you to be of more importance. Great destinies often hang on trivial incidents or small beginnings. Acknowledge the Lord secretly, at the throne of grace, and openly before his people and the world. Never be ashamed of your best Friend, and infinitely wise Counsellor. And when you have asked God's advice, wait for it, ever avoiding a snare into which many fall, that of asking God to

direct them, and then departing from his presence to carry out their previously concerted plans. The advice tendered to you is tendered to the more advanced in years, the old and grey head attesting, not unfrequently, that even to hoary hairs the Lord is true to his promise, "Them that honour me, I will honour."

The certain result of this acknowledgment will be, "he will direct thy paths." How will he do this? Not by amazing us with visions from heaven, nor by speaking in an audible voice, nor by performing some miracle on our behalf; but rather by the sweet, secret promptings of the Holy Spirit, by the application of his blessed word, by the enjoyment of his presence at the throne of grace, by blocking up the evil way, so that we cannot walk in it, or by presenting us with an open door, in the right way, from whence no deliverance might have been expected. If our way is hedged up, and we cannot go forward, without a breach of principle, then we may know that the Lord's hand is against us, so far as that way is concerned. If, however, the way is open, and we enjoy the Lord's presence in following it, then we may rejoice in the Lord's direction. Trusting thus in the Lord, the promise runs, "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it,' when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." All ye who trust in the Lord, and acknowledge him, look for its fulfilment.

What are we doing? Are we trusting in the creature or trusting in God? Which do we acknowledge? An old divine says, "The best creature is but a cistern, not a fountain; and our dependence on it makes it a broken cistern, and strikes a hole through the bottom of it, so that it can hold no water." If such be the case, how much better is it to look up unto the Lord daily, and cry—

"Guide me, O thou, great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land,
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
Hold me with thy powerful hand,
Bread of heaven
Feed me till I want no more."

GOD IN CHRIST.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."—1 Cor. v. 19.

As dependent creatures, but above all, as fallen sinners, it is of infinite moment to know *how* the great God will demean himself towards us, and whether it is possible on his part to reconcile us unto himself again. For sin having interfered to break off our connection with him, and to render us as much unlike himself as darkness is to light, we cannot gather from either creation or providence whether he will ever have anything more to do with us again, or so take us in hand as to reconcile us to his own holy nature, his government, and his law. And should he, from a regard to his own dignity, resolve never to deal with us but on principles of strict justice and equity, our case would become one of everlasting despair; for our acceptance and happiness depend on our reconciliation to God, and as it is utterly impossible that we can reconcile ourselves, it comes to this one point, that unless he, in infinite mercy, will undertake the mighty work, we are undone for ever and for ever.

Consequently, everything will depend upon the position he assumes towards us. If he appear only in creation or providence, we behold his greatness and majesty, but we discover no pardoning love; or should he manifest himself only in the law, our case is even more hopeless, for "by the law is the knowledge of sin." But should he take up another position, where justice can unite with mercy, in the great work of reconciliation, then our case is fully met, for there, both law and grace agree in the one undertaking of reconciling a guilty nature to his own. Such is the manifestation of God in Christ,—a Sovereign and a Saviour—the eternal Ruler and an Almighty Redeemer. It is not God in creation, nor God in providence, nor God in the law, but *God in Christ*. Upon this great subject, let our thoughts dwell for a brief space, and consider,

I. THE SINGULAR POSITION ASSUMED

BY THE MOST HIGH.—"God was in Christ."

1. God was in *the covenant of Christ*. That there was such a covenant, and one arranged and completed, as to the covenanting parties, the work assigned to each, and the objects of mutual intention, cannot be doubted by any candid reader of Holy Scripture. We meet with it in the Psalms, (lxxxix. 3, 28, 34, &c.), in the Prophets repeatedly, and in the New Testament, again and again. Were there not solemn transactions "before the world began?" Was not Christ considered as slain from "the foundation of the world?" Was there not an "eternal purpose which God purposed in himself?" Are not believers "called according to that purpose?" And is not this covenant plainly the rule of our calling, when we are assured that he hath called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus, *before the world began?* What do these weighty passages mean, and many more like them, but that there were profound engagements made, and a mighty purpose formed upon them, "*before the world began?*" And how could there have been a giver, a gift, and a plan of working, but, as there were contracting and consenting parties, with a mutual understanding as to the united object to be accomplished? And what were these, but covenant transactions? God was in *the covenant of Christ*.

2. God was in *the person and the personal work of Christ*. The mere manhood of Christ would never have met the case, or have come up to the intention. The character required was that of Immanuel, "God with us," and the man Jesus was but the humanity in this amazing constitution. *Alone*, the humanity would have been manhood, but nothing more—and the case demanded a God-man. Hence, God was there of necessity, in order to fulfil the stipulated

conditions of the everlasting covenant. And he assumed that position, entered that body, and tabernacled in that man Jesus. There was the perfect God, and there too the perfect man, but both in one. Hence, the Jesus could say, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works;" "I and my Father are one;" and in words more remarkable and distinct than any other, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." Imagine, for a moment, a Moses, or an Elijah, a Peter or a Paul, giving utterance to such a statement. In their mouths it would have been nothing short of blasphemy; but coming from Him in whom "dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead, bodily," it but confirmed the great gospel truth, that "God was in Christ," in both person and work.

And when he went about "his Father's business," when he healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and life to the dead,—when he cast out devils, and gave power to his own appointed servants to cast them out also, and when he declared, "Even so," equally with the Divine Father, "hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;" and that "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live,"—what was it but that "God was in Christ?" In that wonderful manhood, there was "over all, God blessed for ever." He spake as God; he performed the works of God; and wherever he went, men "beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,—full of grace and truth." God was in Christ, whether we regard his person, or his unparalleled work. God spake in him, worked in him, and made both his words and works, Godlike and Divine. "God was in Christ."

3. God was in *the gospel of Christ*. The plan and arrangements of this "glorious gospel," were Godlike. That there should be a *perfect* union of justice and mercy, of righteousness and peace, of the broken law and rebellious but accepted sinners, was, indeed, Godlike. That a jealous God, jealous of his everlasting rights, should smile again on rebel worms, and not this only, but embrace and call them sons, "joint heirs with Christ," this was Godlike, and full of an Almighty mercy. It was truly wonderful love,

Godlike love—which the Father bestowed on the saints that they should be called "sons of God." But, it is so, even "now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." And in all the provisions of the gospel, it bears every evidence of God in Christ. Here, Divine law is honoured by an everlasting righteousness, such as only a Divine Being could render by an active and perfect obedience under every form of trial, temptation, and distress; and, here, is the atonement for sin committed, as perfect and entire as the holy law which demands it at the great Surety's hands. Here, God and man meet on a common ground, the one to testify his acceptance of the Surety's work, and the other to be pardoned, regenerated, adopted, and saved, by the free consent, and full co-operation of Him against whom the sinner has hurled his black transgressions. Here, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, the Comforter, is awarded to Christ "without measure," and by him given out to call, renew, adopt, and sanctify all his seed, so that not one of them shall be overlooked among the workings of gospel grace, or missed from the making up of "his jewels." Here, too, are the promises, "all the promises of God, in him yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us;" promises for time, and promises for eternity,—promises to the church, and promises to each separate believer—all yea and amen! Here also is God in every attribute of gospel majesty;—it is alike "the glorious gospel of the blessed God," and the "glorious gospel of Christ." As an exhibition of power and wisdom, it is "Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God;" and in it he is of God "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." In a word, it is the gospel of God—of his grace, his power, his wisdom, and his righteousness. In it, God is all and in all; its beginning, its way, its end; the alpha and the omega, the first and the last.

And what less than this *God in the gospel* can secure its success, or pledge that it shall not be a disastrous failure? What short of Godlike power and wisdom can beat down the combined opposition of earth and hell to the glorious

gospel of the grace of God? What else defeated an apostate Julian, who swore to be its overthrow? And what besides exploded the rancorous hostility of the French philosophy, which through such vain men as Voltaire, Volney, Rousseau, and others, declared its purpose to blot the name of Christ from the memory of mankind? What too, short of this, has preserved the gospel from an utter extinction, by the falsehoods, inventions, and perversions of Popery? And what besides this Godlike power, nerves us to preach and teach, and trust that gospel, with a *full assurance* that it shall "not return void," but accomplish every purpose of "God in Christ?" Here, all is

solid, fixed, and certain, as the everlasting hills; but take from the gospel the glowing truth of "God in Christ," and it becomes a system of mere morals, a wild human speculation, a creature adventure, as void of purpose as an empty dream, changeable as the wind, and as much the sport of chance as a feather in a tempest. But when we view God in Christ, in that gospel, then *only* do we feel an immovable assurance that "the gates of hell shall never prevail against it."

II. THE GREAT PURPOSE OF GOD IN ASSUMING THIS POSITION,—to "reconcile the world unto himself." W. S.

(To be continued.)

THE SCRIPTURE RULE OF EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL CASES.

By JOHN BROWN, A.M.

It is the law of England that a man be held innocent until he be proved guilty; and the law of England, in this instance, is the law of God. Lev. xxiv. 14; Numb. xxxv. 30; Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 15—19; Matt. xviii. 15—18; 2 Cor. xiii. 1; 1 Tim. v. 19. On comparing these passages together, we observe—

1. That under the former dispensation, circumstantial evidence *alone* was inadmissible. The person who attested guilt required to be an eye or ear witness of what he testified. "Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that *heard* him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him." Lev. xxiv. 14.

2. It was not lawful to put a murderer to death on the testimony of *one* witness only. Two witnesses at least were necessary. "Whosoever killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses; but *one* witness shall not testify to cause him to die." Numb. xxxv. 30. This rule applied to all cases of capital punishment. "At the mouth of *two* witnesses, or *three* witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of *one* witness he shall not be put to death." Deut. xvii. 6.

3. This rule of evidence was not applicable to capital offences only; it was

of *general* application. "One witness shall not rise up against a man, for *any* iniquity, or for *any* sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established." Deut. xix. 15. Our Lord applies this rule to every possible offence. Matt. xviii. 15, 16. Strict justice requires the same amount of evidence in every case; for if it would be unjust to put an innocent man to death, on the same principle it would be unjust to visit him with any degree of punishment. "He that is unjust in the least, is also unjust in much."

4. The reason of this law of evidence is obvious, viz, to guard against the punishment of the innocent, it being less likely that two or more persons would unite in a falsehood, than that a single witness would bear false testimony. It is a principle which will be universally admitted, that, where there is any doubt at all, it is better that the guilty should escape, than that the innocent should suffer.

5. It is readily admitted, however, that two or more witnesses may unite in a false testimony. Of this we have a painful example in the two sons of Belial who falsely swore away the life of Naboth, the Jezreelite. 1 Kings xxi. 1—14. And we have another example still more painful,

in the case of the many false witnesses who laid to the charge of the innocent Redeemer "things that he knew not." In the latter case, however, the evangelist observes, that "their testimonies agreed not together," Mark xiv. 56—59; a circumstance from which we may gather a valuable hint as to the importance of sifting evidence by cross-examining the witnesses. For as truth is always consistent with itself in whatever order it may be put, cross-examination will do much to elicit truth, and detect falsehood. The different parts of a credible testimony will answer to each other as a key corresponds to the wards of the proper lock, and thus produce conviction of its truth in the minds of all who hear it.

But in the cases to which we have just referred, not only were the witnesses false, but the judges were unjust in the highest degree. In them we have a most awful exhibition of human depravity, and a striking proof that the most perfect innocence will not always protect a man from wrong, as well as an argument for the necessity of a judgment to come, when all false judgments shall be reversed, and all wrongs shall be redressed. "And moreover," says Solomon, "I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there. I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose, and for every work." Eccl. iii. 16, 17.

6. Every testimony not supported by evidence was regarded as *false*. If the testimony were even *true*, it was of necessity regarded as false in law. Even Jesus himself did not insist in his own claims being sustained on the evidence of his single testimony. "If I bear witness of myself," says he, "my witness is not true," i.e., it is not to be regarded as true, unless it be supported by the testimony of others. "It is also written in your law," says Jesus again, "that the testimony of two men is true," and, consequently, the testimony of a single witness is not entitled to belief.

7. In the case of a *false* testimony being borne against a man, after a diligent investigation was made, the false witness was liable to the punishment due to that particular offence with which the accused person had been charged. "If

a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that which is wrong, then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the Lord, before the priests, and the judges, which shall be in those days, and the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother, *then shall ye do unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother, so shall thou put the evil from among you.*" Deut. xix. 6—19.

8. In the case of guilt being *proved*, the witnesses were required to take the *lead* in inflicting the punishment. "The hands of the witnesses shall be *first* upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hands of all the people." Deut. xvii. 7. This would tend to make the witnesses very careful to give an accurate testimony. Many would be willing to bear witness against a man, who would not be willing to inflict the punishment. But if a man be prepared to do the one, he need not scruple to do the other. The responsibility lies on the *witness*, rather than on the jury, the judge, or the executioner.

9. The Lord Jesus has adopted this rule of evidence as the law of his kingdom. "Moreover," says he, "if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, *that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.* And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." Matt. xviii. 15—17. See also 2 Cor. xiii. 1; 1 Tim. v. 19.

Like all other Divine institutions, this rule is admirably adapted to promote the peace and prosperity of a church. Were it strictly attended to, the following evils never could occur:—

1. No man should be in danger of being excluded, or even suspended from the fellowship of a church *until his case were tried*. Whether suspension be a Divine ordinance, we shall neither at present affirm nor deny; but it appears to us to be an unscriptural step to require, or even request, a church-member to

decline communing on mere suspicion ; because the law supposes every man to be innocent until he be *proved* guilty.

2. No man would prefer a charge against another *without proof* ; and if an offence were of a *private* nature, the offended party would take the previous private steps in order to reclaim the offender, or (in the event of failure), to establish the charge "in the mouth of two or three witnesses." And if a charge could not be thus established, Christian prudence would suggest the propriety of leaving the matter till the judgment of the great day.

3. No church would entertain a case *without proof*. No room would consequently be left at a church-meeting for the discussion of mere opinions in reference to character ; for the church would not sit in judgment on opinions, but on *facts supported by evidence*. The church would thus prove a city of refuge for the protection of character, and much fruitless controversy and vain jangling would be avoided.

4. Slander should be effectually discountenanced. The false witness should be made to suffer for his sin. If a false witness were to rise up against any man to testify against him that which was wrong, the church would "do unto him as he thought to have done to his brother ;" and thus "put the evil from among them." This impartial discipline would teach persons not only to avoid intentional falsehood, but to study the strictest accuracy in all their communications. For though inaccuracy is, no doubt, less sinful than intentional falsehood, yet inaccurate persons are generally to blame for carelessness at least ; and the consequences of their misrepresentations may be as mischievous to others as intentional falsehood. High conscientious principles will lead us to examine everything with the most scrupulous care, before we assert it to be a truth.

5. Christians would not withdraw from

churches on account of mere *surmises* against fellow-members. No Christian is warranted to leave a church for retaining those in her fellowship against whom there is *not* scriptural evidence of guilt, *even if he knew them to be guilty* ; because *no church is warranted to put such away*. Some Christians seem to think that they ought not to remain in a church, unless they have perfect confidence in *all* the members ; but however desirable this may be, it is sometimes impossible. We may even have *personal knowledge* that an individual is walking inconsistently with his profession, and yet be unable to bring evidence to bear on the case ; and it would be unreasonable to expect a church to act under such circumstances. A minister of a connexional body, for example, when referring to another minister who has been deposed for immorality, blamed the court for not entertaining a charge which he had long before preferred against him ; and when asked what evidence he had, replied, "Why, I had *my eyes*." But however satisfactory these witnesses were to him (and a man's eyes are, no doubt the best witnesses in the world to *himself*), yet we think the court acted scripturally in not regarding them as sufficient witnesses to *them* ; for the Scripture requires the eyes of *two or three*, "that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." And, in such a case, a church is not at all responsible, supposing the person to be *guilty*. His blood is on his own head,—the sin remains with himself. The church would, indeed, be to blame in rejecting or overlooking legal evidence ; but as she is not warranted to act without it, she ought not to be blamed for delaying to act until God, in his providence, make the case clear ; and, therefore, no person is warranted to leave her fellowship under such circumstances, but should refer the matter to the Lord.

Contig, Newtownards, Ireland.

HOW TO USE THE BIBLE.

THE Bible is the worst abused book in existence. By some it is neglected altogether, by others despised, and by num-

bers more so mutilated and taken piecemeal from its own natural connection, that it becomes a one-sided book, or one

that only speaks just as sectarians wish, in favour of their own petty systems. Among these, its noble grandeur, its majestic completeness, is lost, and nothing remains but detached fragments, that lie about the foot of the mountain merely to show how much of havoc, of thunder, storm, and tempest, have revelled among its sacred elevations.

As this is the case at the present day, as much so as at any former period, it is of weighty importance to know how to correct and avoid the spreading evil; and to aid in this, the following thoughts may be found of considerable use.

1. The Bible should always be approached as *the word of the great God who made heaven and earth*. We should always remember that it is the word of God, and not the word of man, and study to approach it with a becoming reverence. There should be no levity or thoughtlessness, or unconcern, but everything grave and serious, as becomes the presence of the Almighty Father. God speaks in that book as much as though he were present; and how should we demean ourselves were we to hear his voice and behold his majesty? Yet he speaks as distinctly in his word as if we heard an audible voice from God, or saw his glory. How, then, ought we to treat his book, where every page speaks as fully as the voice of God? We should never open that book, and never read its sacred lines, without deeply thinking that *this is the word of God*.

2. We should regard it as being *in all its parts and equally*, the word of the Most High God. We should not act as if one part were his word, but another was not. We should not imply that the *promises* are more than the *precepts*, or that the *precepts* are less important than the promises. We should labour to avoid the injurious distinction between the *doctrine* to be believed and the *practice* to be exhibited. We should fly from the abuse of calling one part *legal* and another *evangelical*, as if the Holy Spirit would put chaff with the wheat in the granary of heaven. Is it not *all* the word of God? Is not "*all* Scripture given by inspiration of God?" And is it not *all* "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all

good works?" Why then make invidious distinctions where *all* is equally divine, and equally serviceable for profit as the word of God?

Yet these distinctions are constantly made, and some professors glory in their indulgence. We heard of one man who never cared to read the Redeemer's sermon on the mount, because he thought that Jesus Christ was *very legal* when that was preached. And the two great classes of Calvinists and Arminians are sadly guilty of this in their systematic instructions. We have heard scores of preachers in both those bodies, and have found the defect in both alike. The Calvinist never has taken such a text as this, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," or such a one as this, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." And the Arminian has never chosen his text from such words as these, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy;" or "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." Now, where all alike has come from heaven, why judge thus unequally, and why make distinctions, as if God spake in some passages but not in others of his holy word? Does not every star give light from heaven? Why, then, despise the smaller because another may be brighter?

3. We should read and study the word of God *in the spirit of prayer*. As that holy book was given by men of God who "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and the Spirit is promised as the Spirit of truth to lead the saints into all truth, what can be more proper than to seek the teachings of that blessed Spirit by fervent prayer? It should be remembered also, that our natural understandings cannot receive the things of the Spirit, because they are *spiritually discerned*; yet the word of God is full of the things of the Spirit. Is it not of infinite importance, therefore, that we seek the enlightening influence of that sacred Spirit, that we may *know* the things that are freely given to us of God? How, besides, can we fully understand them? Hence, we should always come to the word of God with the prayer of the Psalmist, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may discover wondrous things out of thy law."

4. We should come to the word of God, with an earnest desire to *reduce to practice* whatever it may teach. That the book of heaven was given for practical purposes is evident from its very nature. For if we take the high ground of faith, and contend that God's word was given to form that faith in the believer's heart, yet we are distinctly assured that "faith without works is dead, being alone." Life in the body is given that we may *live*, and living is breathing, motion, and action in a thousand different forms. So spiritual life, which is true faith, is bestowed for similar purposes in a divine life upon earth. This life is fed, strengthened, and increased, by the word

of God, therefore the Redeemer has said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Our earthly life should be governed by the heavenly, and not the heavenly by the earthly. But this will be *only* in the proportion that we live the word of God in our daily conduct. Every doctrine, precept, and promise should be reduced to practice, for belief, obedience, and confidence. In this way *the word of Christ will dwell in us richly in all wisdom*; and this will prove our best weapon for attack and defence, even "the sword of the Spirit, *which is the word of God.*"

S.

Fragments and Choice Sayings.

THE TRINITY.

I freely grant, that, had I consulted my own reason only, I could not have discovered some mysteries of the gospel. Nevertheless, when I think on the grandeur of God, when I cast my eyes on that vast ocean, when I consider that immense ALL, nothing astonishes me, nothing stumbles me, nothing seems inadmissible, how incomprehensible soever it may be. When the subject is Divine, I am ready to believe all, to admit all, to receive all; provided I be convinced that it is God himself who speaks to me, or any one on his part. After this, I am no more astonished that there are three distinct persons in one Divine essence; one God, and yet a Father, a Son, and a Holy Ghost. Either religion must tell us nothing about God, or what it tells us must be beyond our capacities; and in discovering even the borders of this immense ocean, it must needs exhibit a vast extent in which our feeble eyes are *lost*. But what surprises me, what stumbles me, what frightens me, is to see a diminutive creature, a contemptible man, a little ray of light glimmering through a few feeble organs, controvert a point with the Supreme Being, oppose that intelligence who sitteth at the helm of the world, question what he affirms, dispute what he determines, appeal from his decisions, and, even after God hath given

evidence, reject all doctrines that are beyond his capacity. Enter into thy nothingness, mortal creature! What madness animates thee! How durst thou pretend—thou, who art but a point, thou, whose essence is but an atom—to measure thyself with the Supreme Being; with Him whom heaven, the heaven of heavens, cannot contain. "Canst thou by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?"—*M. Saurin.*

FREE-WILL AND FAITH.

The understanding of a natural man is so darkened, as to take that for happiness, which is, in fact, essential misery. The darkness of his understanding necessarily perverts his will, so that he inevitably chooses evil in preference to good. A perverse will poisons the affections; and corrupt affections, if uncurbed by providential restraints, never fail to teem with the baneful fruits of practical immorality and licentiousness.

The faith of God's people is a faith inseparably connected with holiness, and infallibly productive of practical obedience. Whoever has St. Paul's faith, will and must have St. James's works.—*Toptady.*

A Page for the Young.

NAPOLEON CONQUERED.

The Holy Scriptures are full of assurances that God will take care of all those who do his will, even when appearances may be most against them. Nothing can withstand the influence of kindness, for God is always on the side of those who practise it. This was exemplified in the following remarkable case.

Napoleon Buonaparte was going to take possession of Frankfort, and destroy the liberties of that old free town of the German empire; but he first rode around the city in company with some of the inhabitants. "What is that new building?" asked he. "That," they replied, "is an hospital we have been erecting for your sick soldiers." "And that?" enquired the Emperor, pointing to another.—"It is our granary for the supply of your army." The Emperor was astonished, and perhaps ashamed, for he left the city almost unmolested and granted it peace, in the midst of the nearly universal ruin of Germany. It would have been impossible for the people of Frankfort to resist Napoleon by the sword, yet they gained the victory they desired, by their endeavour to return good for evil, and to benefit one who, as they believed, was about to injure them.

A SAD DEATH-BED.

"William the Conqueror was extremely alarmed on his death-bed, and entreated the clergy to intercede for mercy, exclaiming, 'Being laden with many and grievous sins, (O Christ!) I tremble; and being ready to be taken (by and bye) unto the terrible examination of God, I am ignorant what I should do; for I have been brought up in feats of arms, even from my childhood; I am greatly polluted with effusion of much blood; I can by no means number the evils which I have done for these sixty-four years, wherein I have lived in this troublesome life, for the which I am now constrained, without stay, to render an account to the just Judge.'"

A NOBLE HEARTED BOY.

(*A True Story*).

'Twas on a frosty winter's day,
The snow lay on the ground,
The leaves were withering in decay,
All scattered far around.

When 'neath a stately mansion high,
A little maiden sat,
The falling tear-drop dimmed her eye—
But who would care for that?

What recked they, though her trembling form
Sat shivering at their door?
Did not their fire burn bright and warm,
Why should they heed the poor?

A little boy was passing by,
Dressed in the richest fur;
He saw the tear-drop in her eye,
What could he do for her?

She looked so helpless and so poor
Her clothes were torn and thin,
He wished it was his father's door,
For he would take her in.

Alas! that sigh, that heavy moan,
Her grief how could he check?
He took the fur from off his own,
And wound it round her neck.

Then on he passed, and never stayed
The thankful child to bear;
He felt himself as fully paid,
For he had dried her tear.

God bless and keep thee, precious boy,
From evil undefiled,
That thou may'st yet a blessing be,
To many an orphan child. B. H.

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNG.

(*Under sixteen years of age.*)

There are three things in Holy Scripture which we are specially to "remember." What are they?

An apostle was twice rebuked,—Who was it? And by whom was the rebuke administered?

What great man in Scripture praised God several times every day? How many times a day? And where is the passage to be found?

A prophet, under great peril for doing so, prayed three times a day. Who was it? And what was his danger?

Obituary.

MR. JOHN ELLISON,

Formerly Deacon of the baptized Church at Accrington.

[Read at the end of the funeral discourse, from the text which he chose, preached in Barnes-street Chapel, Accrington, Nov. 10, 1861.]

JOHN ELLISON was the son of John and Martha Ellison, of Antley, near Accrington. He was born in the year 1814. When a lad, he became a scholar in the Sabbath-school connected with the Baptist congregation, the family to which he belonged being descendants of the John Ellison, who was the first Baptist in the vicinity of Accrington, and by whom the church at Oakenshaw was commenced, which afterwards had a meeting-house erected at Accrington.

Our deceased brother, when a lad, had the character of being rather unmanageable in the school; and this is not to be wondered at, for youths of strong, decided, and impulsive nature like his, are the most difficult things on earth to manage until divine grace takes possession of their hearts, and then the power of the Lord leads them in willing subjection to the mild and gracious dominion of Jesus. It is, however, greatly to the encouragement of teachers, that so many children of this sort become, like our departed brother in after life, followers of the Saviour, and then their teachers who sowed the precious seed, weeping, "come again, with joy, bringing their sheaves with them."

My recollections of John, date from the time when, after having awhile forsaken the school, he and his brothers and sisters began to attend the chapel again. They occupied a pew just before the pulpit; and whatever pew was empty, theirs was generally well filled. He would then be approaching twenty years of age, at least, seventeen or eighteen. Within the space of a few years from that time, he and a sister, and two brothers were baptized and united to the church. John, with his brother James, became actively and use-

fully employed in the Sabbath-school as devoted teachers, but James was soon called to the joy of his Lord. John was not only useful in the school at Accrington, in which he had before been a scholar, but for a long time he rendered valuable assistance in teaching and superintending the school in Oswaldtwistle, and thus greatly promoted the interest which has since been diffusing the truth in that township. After having a few years walked in the fellowship of the Christian church, he married a truly excellent and amiable fellow-labourer in the school, and most exemplary young Christian, Nancy, the daughter of the late Thomas Briggs, who was most richly adorned with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is of great price. If all young Christians, and members generally, were like her, the churches would, indeed, be fragrant gardens of the Lord. John, was in a few years chosen to be a deacon of the church, soon after which he went with his family to reside at Manchester. Here, his close application to a business, by no means a healthy one (engraving), destroyed his health, and obliged the family to return to Accrington. His wife came over to take a house, and I happened that morning to travel in the train, in company with her. She was sorrowful and sad;—her husband's health appeared gone, and she was expecting soon to be left a desolate widow, with a few fatherless children.

But God had otherwise determined. The husband for whom she felt so much concerned, was spared to recover his health. She was not left a widow: but soon after they returned to live at Accrington; she was one day busily employed in her household duties, when the message was brought,—“The Master is come and calleth for thee.” Instantly, she left this bustling world and became a disembodied, and we trust, a glorified spirit.

John now sustained the heaviest of all earthly trials, the loss of an affectionate

and excellent wife; but other trials followed by which his little earthly property so industriously gathered, was mainly swept away. Our brother, however, like Job, held fast his integrity; and God in mercy restoring his health, enabled him again to follow his own occupation for the support of his family.

Subsequently, he was excluded from the church with which he had been connected about twenty years, but not for having forsaken the faith or practice of the gospel, but, because he so firmly and tenaciously held fast those views of the atonement of Christ, which have ever been dear to the Baptist body, and because he resolutely refused to support and encourage the opposite notions, and denounced them as tending to Socinianism. He, along with other members, who were also excluded, or, had withdrawn for similar reasons, founded the church in Barnes-street, Accrington, in the prosperity of which he took a deep interest. In the death of John Ellison, as well as in that of John Chadwick, a few months before, and, more recently still, in the decease of our brother, David Griffiths, the church in Barnes-street, has greatly suffered. These were all men of tried character, long experience, and extensive knowledge, and all of them ardently concerned for the stability and increase of this rising church, which laments them as departed fathers and defenders of Israel.

Our departed brother having, for a time, been thus mercifully restored to health, rendered valuable service to the

new interest; and on various occasions, he conducted the public worship, preaching with much acceptance, and assisting in the Sabbath-school. He was thus usefully employed, when God was pleased in his wise, but inscrutable counsels to visit him again with affliction; which we hoped would soon pass away, but after some weeks, it was manifest his disease was likely to become fatal. His strength began to fail in the spring of 1861, and during the months of summer, his sufferings were, at times, very heavy; but, as the autumn came on, it became evident that the time of his departure was drawing near. That he wished to recover, if such were the will of God, we do not doubt; for what parent about to leave a family of orphans in this wide, wide world, does not wish to be spared for their good. God is, indeed, the "Father of the fatherless," and blessed are those who imitate his compassions towards such. But the frame of mind in which our brother passed his last days on earth, appeared to me a calm reliance on the great principles of the gospel, "looking for the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ to eternal life." The last interview that I had with him, he said to me, a little before I came away; "We have often met together on earth, I hope we shall meet in heaven." Let us cherish this hope, and be careful that it is well-founded. "We desire that every one of you do give the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end."

I. H.

Correspondence.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS—ARE THEY NOT ABUSED?

To the Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine.

DEAR SIR,—Your correspondent, "An Observer," has mooted a question, the importance of which can scarcely be over-estimated, and upon which I would venture to offer a few brief remarks. That the Sunday-school, though an institution of purely human appointment, has, by God's blessing, proved a means of great

good, all will readily and thankfully acknowledge. Heartily would we thank God for the Sunday-school, and zealously aid it by our contributions and our labours, and in every way endeavour to extend its usefulness. But there is another school,—the family, or home-school, which is not a human institution, but is exclusively of DIVINE origin and appointment, and in which every child is being daily and almost hourly trained, even from its earliest infancy. Most wisely do we expend money and labour

on the former institution, but what are we doing in regard to this latter,—the Home School, upon which the child's future character and destiny so greatly depend? What are we doing to promote its healthy and efficient operation? I fear very little. When the teacher, or district visitor calls at the poor man's house, it is frequently only to inquire if the children attend the Sunday School, and not how they are being trained at home. And, unhappily, both parents and teachers have too generally imbibed the false and mischievous notion that the duty of training up children in the way they should go has been transferred to the Sunday School. But, important as it may be to learn to read, and repeat portions of Scripture, &c., it should be carefully borne in mind that this forms but a very small part of the work of *training* a child; it is in the Home School where the child is being trained, and its future character is being moulded. But look into many homes, and see how those precious young immortals are being trained. Alas! alas! there is the young mother, scarcely out of her teens, ignorant and thoughtless, who has never given one serious thought to the subject, and to whom no one has ever spoken one word of kindly warning, and of counsel, though most

gladly would she listen to anything that concerned the welfare of her dear babes. Here then is opened to us a most important, though much neglected field of Christian labour,—the "instruction of parents in their duty to their offspring." Allow me, sir, here to quote the testimony of the Earl of Shaftesbury:—"I have long felt," observes his Lordship, "that until the fathers and mothers are better men and better women, our schools can accomplish comparatively little. I believe that any improvement that could be brought to bear on the MOTHERS, more especially, would effect a greater amount of good than anything that has yet been done." Now, here is work which obviously many of our Sunday School teachers could not undertake; and, therefore, I have long earnestly desired to see some organization formed, (separate and distinct from the Sunday Schools), the object of which should be, to aid and encourage parents in the all-important work of training their children for usefulness in this world, and for eternal felicity in the world which is to come. But I fear I have already trespassed too much on your space.

I am, dear Sir,

Your's respectfully,

Cheltenham.

J. GROOM.

Reviews.

The Bunyan Library. Vol. IV. The Acts of the Apostles, an Exposition for English readers, on the basis of Professor Hackett's Commentary on the Original Text. By the Rev. SAMUEL G. GREEN, B. A., Rawdon College. With a new and literal version. London: J. Heaton and Son, 21, Warwick-lane. Pp. xxxvi., 310.

This is a book for *readers*, among whom, of course, are included *scholars*. But we say *readers* because the work is eminently critical, and pre-supposes a good amount of discrimination in those who may take it in hand. To such it will be valuable in a high degree, and prove of the utmost use in assisting to form a more correct acquaintance with one of the most important portions of the word of God.

Professor Hackett has rendered eminent service in the department of Biblical criticism, and the work now before us, which is the *first* volume of his "Commentary on

the Original Text," will not lessen his reputation for sacred scholarship. Yet the remark of his present cautious Editor, Mr. Green, that there are "many things, no doubt, both in translation and commentary, they [the readers] must still take on trust," is not precisely to our own mind. This *verbo tenus* demand on our confidence in what assumes to be a more careful search after evidence than is common to expositors in general, approaches too nearly to the indefinite and doubtful, to warrant anything like a solid reliance. It does not affect the commentary in general, but occasionally leaves us in doubt, where, of all things, a firm confidence is most important.

We are not quite sure whether this remark does not hold good in reference to the Professor's dealing with Acts viii. 37. That he should treat that important passage as an *undoubted* interpolation, and exclude it from his text as, beyond all question, an

intruder, appears to us to be a cavalier mode of handling Holy Scripture, not so much in keeping with the modesty of a thorough scholar as could have been wished. His Editor slightly rebukes him for this precipitancy, (page 176), and very properly, as we think, leaves him open to some suspicion as a reliable authority in questions of Scripture criticism.

We are aware of the doubt that has long hung over that passage, and its omission from certain manuscripts; but when, as Mr. Green reminds us, the verse was in the text in the age of Irenæus, (A. D. 170) who was educated under Polycarp the pupil and successor of the Apostle John, it is far more consistent with the interests of truth to believe that Irenæus was right in accepting that passage, than that certain manuscripts are infallible in its omission.

Mr. Green deserves our best thanks for the care and sound judgment he has evinced in preparing a volume which confers honour on the Bunyan Library, and which we hope will be extensively read.

Nichols's Series of Standard Divines. Puritan Period. Works of THOMAS ADAMS. Vol. II. Containing Sermons from Texts in the New Testament. Edinburgh: James Nichols; London: James Nisbet and Co.; Dublin: W. Robertson. Pp. 578.

This volume contains some of the most powerful sermons that Adams ever delivered. He does not "beat about the bush," but deals his blows at a sinful heart, and probes the disorder to its lowest depths. His style of preaching was the most searching of the age in which he lived. In this ability to separate the chaff from the wheat, he had no competitor, and no equal. Never did any preacher so turn the sinner inside out, and expose the "secret sins" of a man to the gaze of day. Among the thirty-two sermons in this volume, there are proof on proof of the amazing power of this man, as a skilful dissector of human character, and we should have rejoiced had our space permitted, to have given our readers several specimens of this ability. Let the following, however, be taken as a type of the whole. It is from a singular sermon on John xii. 6, entitled "The white Devil." "Of all bodily creatures, man (as he is God's image) is the best; but basely dejected, degenerated, debauched, simply the worst. Of all earthly creatures a wicked man is the worst, of all men a wicked Christian, of all Christians a wicked professor, of all professors a wicked hypocrite, of all hypocrites a wicked, warped, wretched Judas. Take the extraction or quintessence

of all corrupted men, and you have a Judas. This, then, is a Judas; a man degenerate, a Christian corrupted, a professor putrefied, a gilded hypocrite, a white-skinned devil. I profess I am sparingly affected to this point, and would fain shift my hands of this monster, and not encounter him; for it is not to fight with the unicorns of Assyria, nor the bulls of Samaria, nor the beasts of Ephesus,—neither absolute Atheists, nor dissolute Christians, nor resolute ruffians, the horns of whose rapine and malice are no less manifest than malignant, but at once imminent in their threats, and eminent in their appearance,—but to set upon a beast, that hath with the heart of a leopard, the face of a man, of a good man, of the best man; a star placed high in the orb of the church, though swooped down with the dragon's tail, because not fixed; a darling in the mother's lap, blessed with the church's indulgence, yet a bastard; a brother of the fraternity, trusted sometimes with the church's stock, yet no brother, but a broker of treacheries, a broker of falsehoods. I would willingly save this labour, but that the necessity of my text overrules my disposition."—Pp. 230–234.

We question whether the English language contains a more complete "showing up" of hypocrisy than this. In this department Adams is as a Raphael among painters.

Historical Papers. (First Series) Congregational Martyrs. London: E. Stock, Paternoster-row. Pp. 196.

No literature in the world is so mournfully rich in martyr memorials as our own. From the death of Albanus under Diocletian, down to Edward Wightman, of Burton-on-Trent, who was given to the flames by order of our own Protestant monarch King James, the brave blood of England has reddened the soil on which we now reap a full harvest of liberty. To that blood, under God, we owe that we are Protestants and not Papists, that we are Non-conformists, and not persecuted because we dare to be men.

It is due to our suffering forefathers that we become familiar with their deeds, in order to catch their spirit, and copy their example. They preferred the chain and the prison-house, the pillory and the scaffold, to a guilty submission to Cæsar when he insolently assumed the prerogatives of God. There were never men more loyal when that loyalty was proper; and there were never men more fearless of consequences when they had to decide "whether they should obey God or man." In their bosoms the immortal truth that conscience

belongs to God *alone*, found a deep, a sacred, and a lasting home; and while no men in the land were more prompt to "render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," there were none more ready to tell Cæsar to his face that he had no right whatever to "the things which are God's."

In this interesting volume we have the records of a numerous band of these worthies, and of the events in which they took part. The information connected with such a period, apart from the sufferers themselves is most valuable, and should be read and registered by every one of Britain's sons who is anxious to preserve the liberties obtained by the great forefathers of English freedom. To such we earnestly commend the work, and assure our readers that they will arise from its perusal more nerved to serve their God, their country, and their entire race.

Arminianism and Calvinism, being the substance of two Lectures. By the Rev. W. STOKES, of Manchester. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row. Pp. 28.

These lectures are just what we should expect in point of clearness of statement, and sound logical argument from the able author. We hope he will continue to give a series of lectures, for there can be no doubt but they are greatly needed. The terms Arminianism and Calvinism are not favourite terms with us, but they seem to be necessary at the present time, to point out the great principles on which numbers of the professed disciples of Christ have widely differed. We shall be pleased if the circulation of these lectures is such as to warrant the author in continuing to give more of them.

J. B.

BRIEF NOTICES.

Old Jonathan for 1861, and March 1862. We do not know another "penny" publication that will bear comparison with this.

It is varied, useful, and thoroughly evangelical. May the Old Gentleman live to see generation after generation crowding around his feet to receive his blessing.

The Liberator for March. On all questions at issue between Churchmen and Dissenters this is *par excellence* the publication of the day. It is most ably conducted, dignified in argument, and abounds with information such as every Dissenter ought to possess.

Black Bartholomew, and the Twelve Years' Conflict. London: E. Stock, 62, Paternoster-row. Pp. 68. On more accounts than one this very neat little book deserves an extensive sale. Its contents are most valuable, and the enterprising publisher has issued it in the cheapest possible form, with a view to place it in the hands of such as are intending to lecture or instruct others in any way, on the Bicentenary of Nonconformity which will take place during the present year. This little book contains the best and most succinct account of "Black Bartholomew," that we have yet seen, and whoever masters its contents, will be equal to the defence of religious liberty at any time and in any company.

Funeral Sermon for Mrs. H. Pillow, by the Rev. John Russell. Pp. 16. An excellent sermon, for one who appears to have been an excellent Christian, and whose example will live for many years to come.

The British Workman and the Children's Friend, for February. Both very useful publications, and adapted to accomplish much good.

Testimonies of Eminent Pædobaptists. London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co. Pp. 16. This tract evinces great labour and research, and convicts the *infant-sprinkler* of error by the admissions of its own advocates. A more useful tract of its kind was never published.

Intelligence.

Foreign.

SAXONY.

EXTRACTS FROM MR. GRISLER'S JOURNAL FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY.

Thanks be to the Lord! for two months of labour, over which, we have no cause

to complain, but only to praise. I will tell you, briefly, what we have been doing for the extension of Christ's kingdom.

On January the 4th, (Saturday night), I returned from the country, where I had been preaching to crowded audiences in various places.

The following Lord's-day, I preached

twice in our hall, in Halle, to other numerous audiences. During the week-days I was much engaged about a house to hold our regular meetings in. At length, I found one, which it seemed that the Lord had prepared for us. The annual rent is 140 shalers (above £20), and in April next we hope to open it.

On Sabbath, the 12th, preached forenoon and afternoon, Monday, the 13th, walked to a town, called Cönnern. A brother living there had hired the spacious hall of the "Black Eagle," and intimated the meeting in the papers. It was the hall in which the great Rationalist U., occasionally lectures, of whose disciples many were present. There were nearly two thousand hearers, and the Lord gave strength, and words, and heart to preach Christ crucified. Having done, and after I had spoken a few words more, one of the multitude cried, "We thank you, sir, for your religious fanaticism, we never believe that there should be no acceptance by God, without Christ, for God himself says, 'in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.'" I answered him that on the ground of God's word there is no salvation without Christ, explained the passage, he referred to, and showed him that the same is just an argument against his views. The discussion continued for a short time, and only served to give that truth, "no salvation besides Jesus," the more emphasis. My opponent was the leader of the Rationalists in the town, and whilst he expressed the desire that I should never come again, the greater mass urged, "Come, soon, again, and we all and still more will attend."

The next day I went to Lößjün, where I preached in October last, and had the same hall, which, with about one thousand hearers was crowded, who quietly listened to the gospel testified. Later at night, I went with brethren and friends in the country, to a brook, where I had the joy to immerse a young convert, who had been awakened through the sermon in October last. We returned and celebrated the Lord's death, and enjoyed a blessed opportunity.

Wednesday, the 15th, travelled to Brachstedt, a large village, where a very rough set of people live, and I had promised to preach. These people, mostly working in the sugar-houses, had threatened me, formerly, with a beating, and the bailiff had tried to prevent the meeting. About six hundred were present in their sinning-hall, and amongst these seeking souls, also were bitter enemies who con-

tinually tried to disturb the meeting; but the Lord gave us to tell earnestly, and in love, the truth as it is in Jesus. Some were very attentive, and wished me soon to come again, whilst others gnashed their teeth. Thus, as in old time, "We preached Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness."

Lord's-day, the 19th January, preached in the forenoon, on "looking to Jesus," and in the evening, on the all-governing providence of God. The next morning, I went early to Merseburg, to arrange a meeting for Wednesday next. Then I had, till night to wade through a deep snow, to reach Kötzschau, where at seven o'clock, the population assembled in their dancing-hall, to hear the gospel, "that Christ Jesus is come into the world to save sinners!" The following day, I was taken to Lützen (the town famous, through Gustav Adolph, king of Sweden, who fell here. Here, the whole town was in great expectation, what in all the world an "English Missionary" will have to say. The hall of the spouting-house was filled to excess, and others stood outside. There was, as usual, a great noise when I first entered, but at once all were quiet; I ascended to my platform, which was a long table. Till I commenced I had felt rather poorly in spirit, but quite different during the service. The Holy Spirit was mightily with us, and many left the place in a different spirit to that in which they came. Two candidates of theology expressed their thanks and joy, and took me to their house, where I spent a pleasant evening.

On Wednesday, the 22nd, travelled to Merseburg, where, about four hundred, mostly of the nobility, had assembled, and listened to the doctrine of the sinner's justification through Jesus. The next time, I shall hire a humbler hall, to get at the poor.

On Lord's-day, the 26th, conducted the usual services in Halle, which continue to be attended so that those who wish to get a seat have to be in time.

On Monday morning, went with the train to Magdeburg. The same evening preached in a hall specially offered for the cause.

On Thursday, walked all day to reach Newhaldensleben, where the whole town was in uproar, and desirous to see and hear an English missionary, as the papers usually announce me. At night, the large hall was filled with various hearers, to whom I preached the cross of Calvary, with good hope of success.

On the 30th, preached again in the morning, in the little meeting-house of our bre-

thren, and in a church-meeting, held afterwards, received a penitent backslider into fellowship.

For Friday night, the last of January, I had the big Colosseum, a hall of immense size, and by many called the *sinden* (*Sündenöhle*) of M., and now filled by its usual worldly visitors. It is a great thing for these to hear the awful consequences of their sins, also the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. Though it is not pleasant to preach in these places, still there are various advantages with it, one of which is, that just in these sinful places, I get many under the sound of the gospel, who never go into a church, and are wholly neglected. This same evening, for instance, an old woman confessed that since 1818, she had not been in any church, and for such a time had not heard the word of God. And this is one of the, by far, the greater mass in Germany. No minister, of any class, can throw upon me the reproach to have come into his field and flock, to interfere with his labours.

FEBRUARY.—Having returned to Halle, I preached there on the Lord's-day, and on Monday, in the largest hall, in Zorbig, I then prepared for a special tour into the kingdom of Saxony, but this, I must relate in a special report, and, therefore, now pass on.* Having escaped the Saxon persecutors, and returned for Sunday, the 16th, I preached again twice in Halle. My hearers who, have now become regular ones, expressed their joy at my return.

On Monday morning, I had to walk all day to Glanasha. At night, the dancing hall there was crowded. Sometimes, as here, I am, indeed, surrounded by the greatest enemies and sinners, and I am sure we shall some day have glorious harvests. The following days, I was permitted to testify the gospel of the grace of God, in two other places, and gatherings of this kind. Towards the end of the week returned to Halle, where, on Lord's-day, the 23rd, preached twice in our hall.

To be short:—The next and last five days of February, I preached every night in another town or village, and had each evening, from six to twelve hundred hearers, and even more, who with great interest, heard the gospel, and we hope and pray, to their eternal life.

Finally, not to weary you, I leave out to speak of various things to be done, besides preaching in so many and large places, as hiring the halls, fighting with the various clergies, bailiffs, &c., who try to hinder our design; and, I also omit to speak of

the various other ways in which we have tried to be useful, as in selling bibles, testaments, distributing tracts, speaking and labouring privately. Many thousands of quite neglected souls, have during the last two months, heard the word of life, and I hope, it has been my special endeavour to preach the plain, pure and full gospel, and to preach it as a dying man to dying men. I am sure, we shall by and by, have many souls for our hire, to present them one day to our beloved Jesus, for our sufficiency is of Him!

Halle, a/S.
March 6th, 1862.

MORITZ GEINSLER,
Missionary.

P.S.—In the middle of February, I made a journey into the kingdom of Saxony, chiefly to visit our persecuted brethren there. As I dare not venture to enter Oederan, where our brethren are living, I had by letter invited them into a village of the neighbourhood, where, on Lord's-day, the 9th, we met; and as it was not possible to stay in the open air, and nobody would receive us, I took the loan of a room in an inn, where we enjoyed a few blessed hours in mutual conversation, prayers and bible-reading. But as a great ball (masquerade) was to take place there, we had soon to leave this room. So we feel that in this world, we are in a foreign country, where we are driven to and fro. As we went towards Oederan, there came from thence, in his fine carriage, the Lutheran minister of O., who is our great persecutor, who having done with his services, was going to the said ball, in which, he with his family, took part, and so he went dancing in the same room, in which we, persecuted by him, had been praying. In another inn, where for the same night, I, on my journey, needs must stay, I found the pastor of the place playing cards (for money too, as usual) with his people. And all this happened on Sabbath! This, indeed, is a state of things to weep over, and if any one ventures to distribute a tract, sell a bible, or speak a word of Jesus, he will be seized through these clergies, considered and dealt with as one of the greatest criminals, or, if he is a foreigner, he will be banished for ever.

When the following day, I arrived in Dresden, I found a summons to the police-court, waiting for me. When I went there, they read to me the answer and decision of the ministry, on my request to be permitted to preach the gospel in the kingdom. It was just what we expected it to be, namely, a negative. I asked a copy of this ministerial decree, and now send it to you.

Our dear English friends and brethren

* See the following postscript.

will, I dare say, now, no longer wonder about the sorrowful state of things in their fathers' home, nor be surprised at our difficulties in getting on there, for in this ministerial decree, they will clearly see that we are strongly prohibited preaching Christ, by a law of 1690. The Saxons, I am sorry to say, are two hundred years behind most other people, and this, we must bear in mind, for thus, at once, we see ourselves thrown back into that darkness, which only was lighted by stakes, and, in a time when inquisitions, banishments and all kinds of persecutions were the order of the day: and, when it was considered a crime to read and explain the bible, even among Lutherans.

But still, that's not the worst; for we may be referred to old laws of the same period (1690), when the Lutherans so severely persecuted the Calvinists in Saxony, one of which runs as follows:—

"Since it still happens, that many, as students, and even women, assemble in special meetings, in their houses, to read the bible, and explain the same after their own judgment, in consequence of which, they will find various errors and misuses in the ruling state-church—we herewith, most strongly forbid, once for all, all such private meetings, and all who still should meet (or hold such *collegia pietatis*) are to be punished with imprisonment."

That, indeed, looks altogether like Rome. I will not now say anything about it, or reply to this law (decree), the knife of a critic, or, even the light and spirit of the bible, but leave this to you, or our able Mr. Stokes. Now, I only wish to raise the question: "*What is to be done now?*" Certainly, the first thing to do, is, to go now to the higher magistrate, even the Highest, who has all power, in heaven and on earth, and I most earnestly would entreat all our brethren to do so, and make the matter a *subject of prayer*. But, then, not to stop with that, I think we should bring such a case also before the judgment-seat of the "public opinion," and use the press, which in our days, is a privilege we should make use of. Another weapon to be put in motion, would be the *might of influence*; and, I hope that our bold Englishmen, who are men of the greatest influence in the world, will take some steps in this way. And the last weapon, I shall willingly keep to myself, namely, to go, obeying God more than man, even through the prisons of Saxony, till our aim is reached—in liberty of conscience, and the obtaining of a free course for the word of God. Yours, affectionately, in the Lord Jesus,

MORITZ GEISLER.

(TRANSLATION.)

Ministerial Decree respecting Mr. Geisler.

(Copy)

"Eimgoden,
16th Jan., 1862.

"Moritz Geisler, of Rosenthal, near Königsstein, the recent missionary of the Baptist church, at Königsberg, in Prussia, lately banished from Oderan, has applied by a written document to the Ministry of Worship and Public Instruction, for permission to deliver religious and biblical discourses in any places he may please in Saxony.

"The above ministry has, however, referred to the Ministry of the Interior, the decision on this suit, for the instituting of which, the petitioner has appealed to the existing legal ordinances of this country, respecting meetings and assemblies.

"But the prohibition of religious conventicles, expressed in the Rescript of March 10, 1690, and also in section 5 of the Conventicle Act of November 22nd, 1850, are opposed to the present petition, because a Baptist Church as an acknowledged and tolerated religious society, does not exist in Saxony.

"It will, therefore, be seen that the petition of the above-named Geisler (who, according to the address given on his document, now resides here in Dresden—No. 4, King-street, (3rd story)—is, according to what is above stated, to be refused, and, as the Ministry of Worship has also commanded, the holding of religious meetings by him is to be most positively forbidden.

"The local authorities will, therefore, give the necessary instructions, at once, to the police.

"The enclosed petition in four sheets, is to be returned to Geisler.

"Dresden, Dec. 29th, 1861.

"The Ministry of the Interior,
Freiherr von Beust.

(Signed) "LEHMANN, S."

"To the magistrates of this place; concerning the Baptist preacher, Geisler, of Rosenthal, near Königsstein.

"This copy has been compared with the original, and is hereby authenticated.

"Dresden, Feb. 14th, 1862.

[Here follow the official signature and seal of the police authorities of Dresden.]

Metropolitan.

BAPTIST EVANGELICAL SOCIETY.

The Annual Sermon will be preached on Wednesday evening, April 16th, at Soho Chapel, Oxford-street (Mr. Pells') by the

Rev. W. Stokes, of Manchester. Service to commence at seven.

The Business Meeting for Subscribers and Messengers will be held at the Baptist Library, 2, Took's-court, Chancery Lane, on Thursday afternoon, April 24th, to commence at two o'clock. Tea at half-past five, charge, sixpence.

And, in the evening of Monday, April 28th, a Public Meeting will be held at Salem Chapel (Mr. Bloomfield's), Meard's-court, Soho. The chair to be taken at half-past six o'clock, precisely. Mr. Förster, the Society's Missionary in Denmark, will address the meeting.

ROSSENDALE.

LECTURE ON POPERY.—On Sunday evening, Feb. 23, the Rev. W. Stokes, of Manchester, delivered a lecture on "Popery," in Zion Baptist Chapel, Bacup. The lecture was an excellent one, and there was a crowded attendance.—*Bury Times*.

BAPTISMS.

PRUSSIA : Königsberg.—In a recent letter from Mr. Geisler, he says : "A few weeks ago, I received letters from Königsberg, in which I am told, that thirty-three more converts have been baptized." At their examination before the church, they attributed their awakening to the blessing of God on Mr. Geisler's ministry. To the Lord of the harvest be all the praise.

BRISTOL : City-road New Baptist Chapel.—The ordinance of baptism was administered, for the first time, in the above commodious place of worship, on Sabbath morning, the 2nd March, when Mr. S. Leonard preached from 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21. The discourse was listened to by a crowded audience, with marked attention. After the sermon, the Rev. E. Probart, pastor of the church, baptized eighteen candidates, being eight males, and ten females.

LIVERPOOL : Great Cross Hall-street.—Feb. 23, four, by Rev. W. Thomas, minister.

MILLWOOD, NEAR TODMORDEN, YORKSHIRE.—Feb. 2, three females and one man ; Mar. 2, three females, by Mr. Speed, of Bradford : all connected with the Sabbath school.

ULEY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.—By Mr. A. Ashworth, three aged persons, on March 6.

DUNDEE : Meadowside Chapel.—On Lord's-day, 16th March, one believer was buried with Christ, in baptism by Mr. John Henderson (one of our pastors). J. S.

DEATH.

Obituary of Mrs. Gatenby, late wife of Mr. W. Gatenby, Baptist Minister, Hulme, Manchester.—The subject of the following brief

memoir was the daughter of the late Mr. Joseph Blackburn,* of Millby, near Banbridge, Yorkshire. Her first serious impressions were produced by the ministry of the late Mr. Sykes,† of Scarborough. The truths of the gospel were applied to her soul by the Holy Spirit, and by the counsel and exemplary lives of her honoured parents. She gave herself first to the Lord, and then to his people, according to his word and his will. 2 Cor. viii. 5. She was baptized in the 19th year of her age, by Mr. Darnbrough, minister of the gospel at the above place.‡

During her earthly pilgrimage, Mrs. G. was called to pass through very many trials, and to endure much affliction ; yet she was spared to see the greater portion of her family settled in life. During the last four years she suffered much, in consequence of a painful accident, having been pushed down by a man in the street, on her way to the chapel, producing a fracture of the thigh. She suffered also many years from a very distressing cough, which was at length the means of bringing her to the "house appointed for all living."

She was calm and peaceful in the prospect of death, and often quoted the lines of Dr. Watts,—

"This life's a dream, an empty show ;
But that bright world to which I go,
Hath joys substantial and sincere,
When shall I wake and find me there."

The New Testament was almost her only book ; on the Lord's-day previous to her death, she two or three times requested her sorrowing partner to read to her, and pray with her ; and on the following day (that on which she died) repeatedly made the same request. Shortly before she departed, she said, "Oh do read me that sweet chapter in Revelations that speaks of heaven." The 22nd chapter being read, and prayer offered, she gave some directions to her youngest daughter ; then, in the presence of two very kind female friends, whom she sincerely loved, she calmly fell asleep in Jesus, and without a struggle, left this vile body of sin and sorrow, to be for ever with the Lord.

* Mr. B. was the first person baptized on a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in that part of the country ; and he held the office of deacon for 34 years. He was convinced of sin by the ministry of the late esteemed Mr. Howell of Knarsborough, and for many years stood a member of the Independent Church meeting at Killethorp.

† Mr. S. was a young man of ardent piety, and during his short life was instrumental in winning souls to Christ.

‡ Mr. D. was the first pastor of the Baptist church, having been chosen from among the brethren to that office. He was a faithful shepherd, but after a few years of gratuitous labours, was by a short illness called to his rest and reward.